

A Movement Toward Health

In working to create opportunities for residents, they saw the chance to address both nutrition and physical activity by offering an ongoing walking group that is linked with the sale of fresh fruits and vegetables.

PROBLEM

Low-income residents in San Bernardino had few safe options for outdoor physical activity and even fewer places to buy fresh fruits and vegetables.

SOLUTION

The short-term goal was to establish a police-monitored walking group at a local park and provide fruits and vegetables for sale immediately following the walks. The long-term goal was to develop a community garden that could strengthen ties between old and young community members, as well as contribute to the health and well-being of families.

PARTNERS

- California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association
- Vines for Life
- Police Lieutenant Diane Holmes
- Congressman Joe Baca
- Council Member Rikke Van Johnson
- New Hope Missionary Baptist Church
- African American 5 a Day Campaign

STEPS TOWARD CHANGE

California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association is a grassroots organization intent on beautifying San Bernardino and creating a safer, healthier community. The group began its efforts by identifying community needs for physical activity and good nutrition resources. They saw the chance to address both nutrition and physical activity by offering an ongoing walking group that is linked with the sale of fresh fruits and vegetables.

California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association got the ball rolling by contacting Reverend Vines. Through his organization, Vines for Life, Reverend Vines works with Hickman's Farm, a local produce supplier, to sell fruits and vegetables at churches and schools. He agreed to partner with California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association to work toward their goals. Together, they selected Anne Shirrells Park as a place where local residents could enjoy a structured group walk, and then buy fresh, low-cost fruits and vegetables at a small produce stand afterwards. Residents said it was not safe to walk in the park so California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association arranged for the police department to monitor the area when the walking group and produce stand were there.



A Movement Toward Health (Continued)

"I look forward
to training
community
residents,
particularly youth,
in the creation
and maintenance
of a community
garden."

Reverend Vine,
Vines for Life

On March 2, 2006, 16 local residents enjoyed their first walk together at Anne Shirrels Park and were able to purchase delicious fruits and vegetables at the small produce stand. The group walk and produce sale have been going strong since the March 2nd kick off.

The success of this effort has prompted further action. Reverend Vines has expanded his produce business. He now sells produce on Saturdays from 11:00am to 3:00pm at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, which is located in the community. He also provides a pre-ordering program for fruits and vegetables. Families can sign up for this service and pick up quality produce at three church sites, a park, and the local health department.

In support of this effort, the *African American 5 a Day Campaign* hosted a community forum to encourage more residents to be involved in creating communities that encourage healthy eating and physical activity. The forum gave the California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association an opportunity to share their success in establishing the walking group and small produce stand. With their short-term goals accomplished, the California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association also announced their goal to develop a community garden. Learning about the success of the walking group and the community's continued need for more places to get fresh fruits and vegetables and enjoy physical activity inspired council member Rikke Van Johnson to take action. He made a commitment at the forum to locate and secure a plot of land where residents could establish and maintain their own community garden. After the forum, the council member and California Gardens Neighborhood Cluster Association identified potential sites for the community garden and plans are underway to move the next phase of this project forward.



For more information, visit www.ca5aday.com or contact Bronica Martindale, *African American 5 a Day Campaign*, at bmartindale@dph.sbcounty.gov.

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